

Appl. No. 10/810,072
Amdt. Dated April 24, 2006

Attorney Docket No.: NSL-030
Reply to Office Action of January 25, 2006

REMARKS:

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended. New claims 19-22 have been added. Applicants thank the Examiner for the allowance of claim 18 if rewritten into independent form. New independent
5 claim 19 corresponds to allowed claim 18 and incorporates all elements of its base claim. New claims 20-22 correspond to original claims 2, 4, and 5 respectively. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite the invention. Claim 13 has been amended to correct for informalities cited by the Examiner. The Applicants submit that these amendments merely make explicit that which was implicit in the claims as originally filed. As such, no new matter has been entered
10 with these amendments. Furthermore, the Applicants submit that these amendments do not narrow the scope of any claim limitation within the meaning of the decision in *Festo*.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claim 1 and its dependent claims have been rejected as being anticipated separately by the Hanak (4,754,544), Vogeli et al. (5,131,954), and Charache et al. (6,057,506) references.
15 Applicants respectfully overcome these rejections.

Amended claim 1 recites the step of providing at least one form of protection that protects against undesired inter-layer contact during cutting. Support can be found on page 4, lines 1-20. Applicant fails to see where the cited references provide protection from undesired inter-layer contact during the cutting process. Accordingly, as the cited art fails to show all elements
20 of the invention as claimed, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn. Claims 2-15 and 18, novel in their own right, are also allowable as they depend from an allowable base claim.

Claims 19-22 are also allowable as claim 19 corresponds to claim 18 previously presented and indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Claims 20-22, novel in their own right, are also
25 allowable as they depend from an allowable base claim.

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CONCLUSION:

For the reasons set forth above, the Applicants submit that all claims are allowable over the cited art and define an invention suitable for patent protection. The Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner enter the amendment, reconsider the application, and issue a Notice of

5 Allowance in the next Office Action.

Respectfully submitted,



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